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The method and apparatus described herein provides a system for retrieving audible and/or visual instructions stored in a machine readable code, such as a bar code. When the code is scanned by a scanning pen or other scanning device, the pen provides audible or visual feedback to the user. The feedback guides the user through a process, such as a shopping sequence, providing instructions to the next input or action. In addition, each code may also contain data indicative of a user response to a previous audio/visual prompt. Optionally, the scanning device may store an identification code which is compared to an authorization code stored in the machine readable code to determine if the user of the scanning device is authorized to see or hear certain information which is also stored in the machine readable code.

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